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## **Family supportiveness and employee work performance**

### **Family supportive supervisor behaviors and organizational culture:**

#### **Effects on work engagement and performance**

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##### **Abstract**

Informed by social information processing (SIP) theory, in this study, we assessed the associations among family supportive supervisor behaviors as perceived by subordinates (FSSBs), subordinate work engagement, and supervisor-rated work performance. Moreover, we explored the role of family-supportive organizational culture as a contextual variable influencing our proposed associations. Our findings using matched supervisor-subordinate data collected from a financial credit company in Mexico (654 subordinates; 134 supervisors) showed that FSSBs influenced work performance through subordinate work engagement. Moreover, the positive association between subordinates' perceptions of FSSBs and work engagement was moderated by family-supportive organizational culture. Our results contribute to emerging theories on flexible work arrangements, particularly on family supportive work policies. Moreover, our findings carry practical implications for improving employee work engagement and work performance.

##### **Key Words**

Family supportive supervisor behaviors, family-supportive organizational culture, work engagement, work performance, social information processing (SIP) theory

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### **Introduction**

Flexible work policies (i.e., FWP) have become increasingly prevalent in today's work settings (Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, Kim, & Giuntoli, 2008; Kelly & Moen, 2015; Leslie, Manchester, Park, & Mehng, 2012). These policies which afford employees control over how, when, and how much they work (Kelly & Moen, 2015), are expected to predict employee desirable behaviors and attitudes (Ng, Eby, Sorensen, & Feldman, 2005; Major, Fletcher, Davis, & Germano, 2008). In spite of their potential benefits, however, there is still no clear evidence regarding how FWPs affect employee reactions of interest (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Some studies found positive relationships between FWPs and employee performance (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Odle-Dusseau, Britt, & Greene-Shortridge, 2012; Weeden, 2005) and attitudes (Odle-Dusseau et al., 2012), whereas others showed that FWPs were negatively related to work engagement (McCloskey & Igbaria, 2003) and work performance (Glass, 2004). Thus, research to date provides limited understanding regarding the direction and mechanisms through which FWPs are likely to influence employee attitudes and behaviors.

Sparked by this gap, the aim of this research is to gain new insights into relationships between FWPs, employee attitudes and behaviors. We focus on perceived family supportive supervisor behaviors which are defined as "behaviors exhibited by supervisors that are supportive of families" (Hammer, Kossek, Yragui et al., 2009, p. 838). These behaviors capture the extent to which supervisors provide emotional and instrumental support to their subordinates, act as role models, and implement creative work-family management policies for them (Hammer, Kossek, Zimmerman et al., 2007). We posit that 1) family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSBs) drive subordinates' work performance through work engagement, and that 2) family-supportive organizational culture, as a contextual variable,

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moderates our proposed associations. We focused on FSSBs for two reasons: First, the dynamic and competitive nature of today's work triggers employees to negotiate with their direct supervisors for practices supportive of appreciating their family lives (Bal & Dorenbosch, 2014; Hammer, Kossek, Bodner, & Crain, 2013). Second, despite their relevance for influencing work performance (Odle-Dusseau et al., 2012), the mechanisms and processes through which FSSBs might relate to work performance have not been sufficiently explored (Paustian-Underdahl & Halbesleben, 2014). We draw from social information processing (i.e., SIP) theory Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) as an overarching theoretical framework.

We contribute to research on FSSBs in three ways. First, in line with SIP theory, we investigated how FSSBs shape subordinates' work engagement and work performance, respectively. Prior studies have either omitted the crucial role of supervisors in implementing family supportive practices (Bhave, Kramer, & Glomb, 2010; Crain & Hammer, 2013), or have solely focused on employee outcomes that are only relevant to the family domain such as work-family interference (Halbesleben, 2006; Paustian-Underdahl & Halbesleben, 2014). Using perceived FSSBs and drawing from SIP theory (House, Umberson, & Landis, 1988; Pfeffer, 1983), we examine how FSSBs affect two crucial work related outcomes, namely subordinates' work engagement and work performance.

A second way in which our study extends existing research is that we examined the moderation of an overlooked yet highly relevant contextual variable in our proposed relationships: family-supportive organizational culture. It refers to the degree to which existing organizational practices and norms are expected to support family life (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999). We position family-supportive organizational culture as a source of information coming from the work environment and therefore respond to calls for studies to examine and disentangle different sources of contextual-social information driving employee attitudes and behaviors (e.g., culture; Bhave et al., 2010; family supportive

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organizational perceptions; Odle-Dusseau et al., 2012). Exploring the boundary conditions through which FSSBs lead to work engagement and work performance is important in at least two ways: 1) This potential interaction is likely to demonstrate the intensity and direction of the effects of two different sources of social information namely supervisors and organizational culture; 2) Understanding the boundary conditions is likely to have implications for the need to adjust supervisor behaviors with organizational culture (or vice versa) in the light of implementing family-supportive work practices (Paustian-Underdahl & Halbesleben, 2014)

Our third contribution relates to our study design. We answer calls in the literature to adopt multi-level (group vs. individual) research designs (Hammer, Kossek, Zimmerman, & Daniels, 2007) to combine and explore the effects of family supportiveness, and extend this research stream via implementing a rigorous research approach (Paustian-Underdahl & Halbesleben, 2014). Moreover, current evidence for the importance of FSSBs and family-supportive organizational culture is largely based on samples drawn from the U.S context (Hammer, et al., 2009; Hammer, Kossek, Zimmerman, & Daniels, 2007). Thus, our research will contribute to increase our collective understanding of the relevance and potential power of FSSB in a substantially different national context, namely Mexico. Our conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 1 and in the following sections we introduce our theorizing regarding the proposed relationships.

**Please place Figure 1 around here**

### **Theoretical Background**

#### **Associations among FSSBs, work engagement, and work performance**

Recent years have witnessed abrupt labor market shifts in the relationships between work and family domains (Hammer, Neal, Newsom, Brockwood, & Colton, 2005; Kossek, Lewis, & Hammer, 2010). These changes have been coupled with a corresponding trend

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toward greater implementation of family supportive policies such as flexible work arrangements (Hill, Grzywacz, Allen, Blanchard, Matz-Costa, Shulkin, & Pitt-Catsoupes, 2008; Hornung & Glaser, 2009), which are primarily aimed to meet rising family demands and to keep talented employees committed (Kossek, 2005; Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011a). In most cases, organizations bestow implementation of these policies to supervisors who are considered the “linking pins” between formal support policies at the organizational level and the needs of employees at the individual level (Crain & Hammer, 2013; Hammer, Ernst Kossek, Bodner, & Crain, 2013). Supervisors therefore could be crucial parties who facilitate the integration of family supportive behaviors within a work setting (Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011b). Despite their potentially crucial roles (referred to as FSSBs from now on; Hammer et al., 2009), little research exists that reveals how such behaviors influence outcomes of interest (e.g., see Odle-Dusseau, Britt, & Greene-Shortridge, 2012, for exceptions). To contribute to this line of research, we explore the associations among FSSBs, family-supportive organizational culture, subordinate work engagement, and work performance.

In line with prior research (Bakker, 2011; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010), we conceptualized work engagement as an aggregate construct composed of vigor (e.g., work is stimulating), dedication (e.g., work is meaningful) and absorption (e.g., work is engrossing). This approach is appropriate given the high correlations among vigor, dedication, and absorption in this research and in prior studies (e.g., Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). Moreover, we do not expect the separate dimensions of work engagement to predict employee work performance differently. Given the increasing emphasis organizations place on employee performance (Gilboa, Shirom, Fried, & Cooper, 2008), we focused on work performance as our behavioral outcome variable.

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While there are potentially different angles to explore our proposed relationships, we build on social information processing (SIP) theory to explain how and when FSSBs and family-supportive organizational culture affect work performance. According to SIP theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), employee perceptions, attitudes and behaviors are influenced by informational cues present in their immediate work environments and such effects are usually beyond the influence of individual dispositions and personality (Pfeffer, 1983; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). The underlying premise of SIP theory is that individuals adapt and shape their attitudes and behaviors depending on the informational cues of the social context they are in (Pfeffer, 1983; Zalesny & Ford, 1990). Based on this premise, we argue that FSSBs deliver cues to their subordinates signaling that they are valued in terms of their family life (Hammer et al., 2005). Influenced by these cues, subordinates are likely to interpret supervisors' behaviors as supportive and form positive perceptions regarding their supervisors' level of FSSBs (Weick et al., 2005), which in turn will increase their work engagement and predict enhanced work performance.

SIP theory explains the mechanisms through which the information individuals perceive in their immediate work setting is linked to their own attitudes (Morgeson & Hoffman, 1999) and behaviors (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). In particular, SIP explains that the social environment, for example organizational culture, in which an individual performs his or her job influences his or her behaviors and attitudes, suggesting that interpersonal relations provide a lens through which individuals evaluate their work environments (Grzywacz & Marks, 2000). The social context influences employee behaviors through the creation of meaning as well as through bringing salient information to his or her attention (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Thus, social context influences employees' beliefs and understanding of what is acceptable and desirable. Based on this reasoning, we argue that employees' perceptions of FSSBs shape their work engagement. The display of family supportive behaviors engenders



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the perception that supervisors support them in their efforts to balance their work and family life (Hammer et al., 2009; Kossek et al., 2011), which, in turn, will increase employees' work engagement. This is mainly because FSSBs tend to involve valuable resources (e.g., flexible work schedule, location arrangements) and receiving these work-related benefits, the focal employee is likely to feel valued, feel stimulated and work in a dedicated way. In their desire to maintain these beneficial relations in the long run, employees are likely to increase their effort, via developing an enhanced state of engagement towards their tasks. Moreover, employees might put extra effort, thus increasing their absorption to avoid unfavorable impressions in the eyes of supportive supervisors.

Similarly, SIP theory posits that social information also shapes individuals' behaviors via influencing the focal individuals' attitudes. Relying on previous research that has well-documented the relationship between work engagement and performance (e.g., see Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011, for a meta-analysis on work engagement), and in line with SIP theory, work engagement is likely to be positively associated with employee work performance.

Extending recent research on FSSBs in the light of SIP theory and combining the above arguments, we contend that FSSBs influence employee work performance via influencing employees' work engagement. Our first hypothesis is:

*Hypothesis 1: FSSBs are positively associated with work performance through subordinate work engagement.*

## **The role of family-supportive organizational culture as a boundary condition**

As discussed, SIP theory argues that individuals' perceptions are shaped by their work environment. According to Bhawe and colleagues (2010), the information from the work context can be disentangled into information from people, and information from the environment. Among people who provide cues, leaders are key parties as they represent the

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linking pins between the organization and the focal employee (Kossek, Pichler, Bodner, & Hammer, 2011b). Among the environmental elements, culture can be considered a key informational-context because it represents shared norms and policies which have profound effects on the ways employees behave (Paustian-Underdahl & Halbesleben, 2014; Thompson et al., 1999).

More specifically, organizational culture is relevant because it represents the instrumental, informational, and appraisal support a focal employee receives (House, 1981; Kahn & Byosiore, 1992). Researchers have consistently shown that supportive organizational policies influence employee behaviors positively (Allen, 2001; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Westman, 2001). Taking into account these points, in our research, we focus on family-supportive organizational culture (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; J. H. Wayne, Randel, & Stevens, 2006). Particularly, we integrate the two dimensions of Thompson et al.'s (1999) family-supportive organizational culture conceptualization: career consequences and organizational time expectations. The former underlines potential reprimands of utilizing work-family benefits such as taking extended leaves for childcare. The latter describes the extent to which employees are expected to prioritize work over family life such as dealing with work matters at home. Consistent with prior studies (Bagger, Li, & Gutek, 2008; Behson, 2005; Thompson et al., 1999; J. H. Wayne et al., 2006), we conceptualized family-supportive organizational culture with these two dimensions, where low scores indicate that organizational practices and policies are geared towards enriching family life.

From the lens of SIP theory, a culture supportive of family signals that employees are valued in terms of allocating their time and energy for family matters above and beyond their work lives (Bhave et al., 2010). Employees make sense of the informational cues coming from the family supportive culture context and seek for consistency between leaders' FSSBs and organizational culture (Hammer et al., 2007; Paustian-Underdahl & Halbesleben, 2014)

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which shape their attitudes (e.g., work engagement) and behaviors (e.g., performance).

Supporting the importance of congruence between supervisor behaviors and organizational culture (Straub, 2012), research on SIP theory demonstrated that when supervisor behaviors are in line with the values and norms of the organization (i.e., representing its culture), employees develop a stronger sense of attachment (e.g., Kossek, 2005; Nielson, Carlson, & Lankau, 2001), and show enhanced performance (e.g., Chen, Takeuchi, & Shum, 2013).

Drawing from these premises, we argue that the positive association between FSSBs and subordinates' work engagement will be stronger in family-supportive organizational contexts. On the contrary, when organizational culture is not supportive of family-friendly policies, the focal employees are likely believe that, even if supervisors try to implement family-supportive policies, they are not likely to be effective, raising potential resistance among other organizational members. Perceiving and making sense of this inconsistency present in the work environment (Weick et al., 2005), the focal employees are likely to be less engaged to their tasks and hence show lowered work performance.

Our second hypothesis is:

*Hypothesis 2: Family-supportive organizational culture moderates the association between FSSBs and subordinates' work engagement. This association is stronger when organizational culture is supportive (vs. unsupportive) of family life.*

Taken together, hypotheses 1 and 2 involve a moderated mediation process (MacKinnon, 2008; MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009; Muller, Judd, & Yzerbyt, 2005) where the strength of the mediation described between FSSBs and supervisor-rated work performance is moderated by family-supportive organizational culture:

*Hypothesis 3: FSSBs have a stronger association with work performance through subordinates' work engagement in organizations where the culture is supportive (vs. unsupportive) of family life.*

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### **Method**

#### **Sample and procedure**

Participants of this study are from a company operating in financial credits industry in Mexico. It is a prominent financial institution with more than 5.000 employees. Prior to the start of the study, company executives and participants were briefed about the overall process including the study goals, measures and potential publication targets. Following their approvals, sample sizes were designed to significantly represent different hierarchical levels of the company, various locations where the company operates, and all different occupations within the company. Within each of these parameters people were chosen randomly. The organizations were offered a report with aggregated results, in which no respondent could be identified by any means. All participants were ensured of the strict confidentiality of the responses and no one else, other than the researchers, had access to the data provided. Surveys were sent to employees and their managers separately, and managers had to respond a survey with questions referred to each of his/her employees. For that internal codes were assigned so that researchers can match data coming from employees and their supervisors.

Data from subordinates and supervisors were collected at separate times. The number of employees invited to participate in the study as supervisors was 607 and we obtained 157 fully usable responses (25%). In a similar vein, 1.253 employees were asked to participate in the study as subordinates, and we obtained usable responses from 738 employees, yielding a response rate of 59%. In the end, we were able to match responses from 654 subordinates with their 134 immediate supervisors. We utilized translation and back-translation procedures to optimize the validity of the survey items (Brislin, 1970; Prieto, 1992). Subordinates had an average age of 31.6 years ( $SD = 6.02$ ). Average tenure in the organization was 3.7 years ( $SD = 1.9$ ); 53% of the sample was female. Supervisors had an average age of 35.2 years ( $SD =$

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8.20) and their average tenure in the organization was 4.3 years ( $SD = 2.7$ ). 59 % of them were male.

In terms of family characteristics, of the subordinates, 53% was married; 66% had children between 0-5 years old, 19% between 15-18 years old, 10% between 6-14 years old, and 5% had children who were aged 19 years or older. On average, participants spent 2.3 hours ( $S.D. = 0.74$ ) with their children on a typical day. They had supper with their children on average for 3.5 days ( $S.D. = 1.3$ ), played with their children on average for 4.6 days ( $S.D. = 1.2$ ), and read to their children on average for 4.2 days ( $S.D. = 1.7$ ) in a week. Regarding the supervisors, 70% was married; 53% had children between 0-5 years old, 22% between 15-18 years old, 17% between 6-14 years old, and 8% had children who were aged 19 years or older. On average, supervisors spent 2.6 hours ( $S.D. = 0.55$ ) with their children on a typical day. They had supper with their children on average for 2.6 days ( $S.D. = 0.8$ ), played with their children on average for 5.7 days ( $S.D. = 1.4$ ), and read to their children on average for 3.2 days ( $S.D. = 1.4$ ) in a week.

## **Measures**

We used a seven-point Likert scale for all items.

***Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviors.*** To measure family supportive supervisor behaviors (FSSBs), we utilized 7 items from a scale (1 = strong disagree; 7 = strongly agree) developed by Hammer and colleagues (Hammer et al., 2009). Items capture emotional support (2 items; e.g., “My supervisor takes time to learn about my personal needs), instrumental support (2 items; e.g., “I can depend on my supervisor to help me with scheduling conflicts if I need it), role model (2 items; e.g., My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance), and creative work-family management dimensions (1 item; “My supervisor thinks about how the work in my department can be organized to jointly benefit employees and the company”). To reduce the potential exhaustion of participants during survey

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completion, we used two items that had the highest factor loadings in their corresponding sub-dimensions. We used only one item for creative work-family management because items of these sub-dimensions have similar meanings (e.g., “My supervisor asks for suggestions to make it easier for employees to balance work and non-work” and “My supervisor thinks about how the work in my department can be organized to jointly benefit employees and the company”) and share high correlations (Hammer et al., 2009; Hammer et al., 2013). In these situations, it is appropriate to use the highest loading item to represent the construct (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Prior research (e.g., Odle-Dusseau et al., 2012) also used a similar approach in reducing the number of items regarding FSSB scale. With regards to selection of one-item for a construct, related research (e.g., individualized HRM practices; Bal & Dorenbosch, 2015) utilized a similar way. We therefore combined these sub-dimensions to an aggregate FSSB score ( $\alpha = .97$ ).

**Work Engagement.** We assessed work engagement with the nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli, Bakker, & Salanova, 2006; 0 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree). This scale consists of three sub-dimensions with three items for each (i.e., vigor, dedication, absorption). Schaufeli and Bakker (2010), building on prior empirical evidence (e.g., Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) argued that the three dimensions of work engagement are very close. For instance, Sonnentag (2003) did not find a clear three-factor structure of work engagement and used a composite score. Related research also revealed that the correlations between latent factors of work engagement ranged between .70 to about .90 (e.g., Hallberg & Schaufeli, 2006; Seppälä et al., 2009). Schaufeli and Bakker (2010), thus, concluded that work engagement is a unitary construct and the total score on the UWES is a valid indicator for capturing work engagement. Drawing from this reasoning and in line with prior research (e.g., Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012; Schaufeli et al., 2006; Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2012), we aggregated vigor, dedication and absorption to a

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composite work engagement score ( $\alpha = .76$ ). Example items are as follow: “I feel bursting with energy” (vigor), “My job inspires me” (dedication), and “I am immersed in my work” (absorption).

**Work Performance.** Using the four items from the scale of Williams and Anderson (1991), managers assessed the extent to which employees fulfill their job responsibilities specified in job descriptions, performs tasks that are expected of him or her, completes assigned duties and meet formal job requirements compared to average (1 = below average, 7 = above average). An example item is “This employee fulfills responsibilities specified in job description”. ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

**Family-supportive organizational culture.** To measure subordinates’ perception of family-supportive organizational culture, items from the scale developed by Thompson and colleagues (1999) was utilized. The six items (three items measuring career consequences and three items measuring time expectations) illustrate the degree to which employees sacrifice their family lives for work (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). One example for career consequences is “In this organization employees who participate in available work-family programs (e.g., job sharing, part-time work) are viewed as less serious about their careers than those who do not participate in these programs”. One example for time expectations is “Employees are often expected to take work home at night and/or on weekends”. In line with prior research (e.g., J. H. Wayne et al., 2006), the sub-dimensions are combined to represent family-supportive organizational culture ( $\alpha = .85$ ). High scores (vs. low scores) indicate supportive (vs. unsupportive) culture.

**Controls.** We controlled for a number of demographic variables including age, gender and tenure of subordinates. Our results did not change hence they were excluded from further analyses. We also controlled for intrinsic motivation and perceived organization support of subordinates. Previous research revealed that employees, who are driven by intrinsic

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motivation, show better work performance (e.g., Utman, 1997), and they tend to be more engaged (e.g., Siu, Bakker, & Jiang, 2014). Research has also consistently shown that there is positive association between organization support and work performance (Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Stewart, & Adis, 2015). For intrinsic motivation, we utilized the four-item scale developed by Grant (2008). One example is “I work because I enjoy the work itself” ( $\alpha = .88$ ; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree). To measure subordinates’ perceived organization support, we used the four-item scale developed by Shore and Wayne (1993). One example is “When I have a problem, the organization tries to help me” ( $\alpha = .93$ ; 1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

## **Results**

Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, internal reliability values and correlations among study variables. All of our study variables had high internal reliabilities ( $\alpha$  value for all variables is above 0.70). The range of correlation values was between 0.07 (between family supportive organizational culture and work engagement) and 0.68 (work engagement and performance).

## **Please place Table 1 around here**

Before testing our hypotheses, we ran a confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) to explore the factorial structures of our measures using AMOS 19.0 with maximum likelihood estimation (Byrne, 2001). We followed established recommendations (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004; Klein, Tosi, & Cannella, 1999) to report our findings. Our model which includes the six study variables (FSSBs, family-supportive organizational culture, work engagement, work performance, intrinsic motivation and perceived organizational support) supported the discriminant validity of our measures ( $\chi^2 = 2228.193$ ;  $df = 480$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 4.64$ ,  $p < .01$ ; IFI = .909; CFI = .909; TLI = .899; RMSEA = .075).



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Due to the hierarchical nature of our data (i.e., work performance of employees is evaluated by their managers and the variance in work performance due to managers' evaluation is 23 %), we applied multilevel analyses to test our hypotheses. To test our first hypothesis which involves the mediation of work engagement between FSSBs and work performance, we followed the recommendations of Bauer, Preacher and Gil (2006). We conducted Monte Carlo Markov Chain (MCMC) simulations with 20,000 iterations to obtain confidence intervals for our proposed indirect effects. We used an on-line tool that develops R value to test the mediation (Selig & Preacher, 2008). When confidence intervals do not contain zero, the indirect effect is significant. Results of our analyses supported hypothesis 1. As can be seen in Table 2, FSSBs were positively associated with work engagement ( $\gamma = .06$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Work engagement was also positively associated with work performance ( $\gamma = .88$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Results from MCMC analyses supported our first hypothesis, as the confidence intervals did not include the value of zero (95% CI = [0.017 / 0.086]; please refer to Table 2 for detailed results).

### **Please place Table 2 around here**

To test our second hypothesis which involves moderation, we followed the recommendations of Preacher and colleagues (2006). To interpret the results; we plotted simple slopes at one standard deviation below and above the mean of the moderator (Aiken & West, 1991). Findings from our analyses supported our second hypothesis. Our interaction term was significant, providing initial support for our second hypothesis ( $\gamma = .04$ ,  $p < .001$ ). We then plotted the interaction at one standard deviation above and below the mean of our moderator. As can be seen in Figure 2, FSSBs showed a positive relationship with subordinates' work engagement when the family-supportive organizational culture was high. The slope for high family-supportive organizational culture was positive and significant ( $\gamma = .17$ ,  $p < .01$ ); the slope for low family-supportive organizational culture was negative and

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significant ( $\gamma = -.21, p < .01$ ). Taken together, these findings support hypothesis 2. Please refer to Table 3 for more details about the results of this hypothesis.

**Please place Figure 2 around here**

**Please place Table 3 around here**

To test our third hypothesis which involves moderated mediation, we used the recommended procedures in recent research (MacKinnon & Fairchild, 2009). Accordingly, we first split the sample into subsamples, using the sample mean value of family-supportive organizational culture. This approach is suggested in recent research concerning moderated mediation analyses (Muller et al., 2005). The indirect effect of subordinates' work engagement was non-significant under the condition of a low family-supportive organizational culture (95% CI = [-0.001 / 0.107]). However, the indirect effect was significant in a high family-supportive organizational culture (95% CI = [0.033 / 0.144]), which supported our third hypothesis.

## **Discussion**

### **Theoretical contributions**

FWPs are becoming a common fixture in work settings (Leslie et al., 2012). Drawing on SIP theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), the present research tested a model elucidating the process through which FSSBs influenced work engagement and work performance. Our model also integrated family-supportive organizational culture as contextual variable influencing our proposed relationships. Our model was supported, lending important contributions to literature.

Our first hypothesis showed that subordinates' work engagement positively mediated the relationship between FSSBs and work performance. This finding emphasizes the role of family supportive supervisor behaviors in driving employee attitudes and behaviors (Hammer et al., 2013; Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner, & Zimmerman, 2011). Given today's work

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settings where flexible work practices are becoming common (Bal & De Lange, 2015; Bal, Van Kleef, & Jansen, 2015), our research constitutes one of the first efforts, to explore the antecedents of work engagement and performance from the lens of FSSBs. Findings from Odle-Dusseau and colleagues' (2012) study revealed that FSSBs are positively associated with work performance. However, other mechanisms are likely to influence this association (e.g., McCloskey & Igbaria, 2003). Moreover, the findings from this study showed that family supportive organizational perceptions did not relate to any of the performance nor attitude related outcomes, calling for further research to delineate these relationships. To start addressing the lack of clear evidence in the literature, we integrated FSSBs, work engagement, and work performance and tested a more complex mediation model. Employees who received high levels of support from their supervisors in terms of family friendly policies reported high levels of work engagement which led to enhanced work performance. These findings are consistent with the themes that have emerged in recent studies: For instance Bal and colleagues (2015) revealed a positive association between career customization (measured as idiosyncratic deals) and employee outcomes (work engagement and career growth). A similar pattern of findings was obtained in another study (Bal & De Lange, 2015), lending clear support to the importance of FWP. This overlap suggests that our study was able to capture a realistic portrayal of the relationships between FSSBs and outcomes. Importantly, going beyond this research stream which has conceptualized and measured individualized FWPs (i.e., flexibility I-deals such as working from home, changes in work schedules), we have shown that FSSBs, which are available to each employee, might be crucial HRM components to drive desirable employee outcomes. Our study therefore extends the emerging research on FWPs (Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, 2013) and particularly family supportive supervisor behaviors (Hammer et al., 2013).

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Our second and third hypotheses showed that family oriented organizational culture is undoubtedly an important boundary condition for the associations of FSSBs, work engagement and work performance. In line with our predictions, our findings reinforce the importance of organizational context –family-supportive organizational culture– in strengthening the links between FSSBs and subordinates’ work engagement. When managers’ family-friendly behaviors are in line with the organizational culture, employees receive consistent information from their surrounding context, make meaning of it (Morgeson & Hoffman, 1999; Turner, 1982) and manage their attitudes and behaviors effectively. From a resource perspective (Anand, Vidyarthi, Liden, & Rousseau, 2010; Halbesleben, Neveu, Paustian-Underdahl, & Westman, 2014; Shore et al., 2004) high supervisory and organizational support in the form of family friendly practices might reinforce each other, making the social information processing easier for the focal employee.

Yet, in organizations with lower support for family friendly practices compared to organizations where there is stronger support, the relationship between FSSBs and subordinates’ work engagement turned negative and the mediation of work engagement between FSSBs and work performance was insignificant. These findings demonstrate that employees heavily relied on the integrity between supervisors’ behaviors and organizational culture (Leroy et al., 2012). Hence, our results imply the need for those in leadership positions to engage in acts that will reflect their words and achieve behavioral integrity that communicate sufficient social information and cues to their subordinates (Ilies et al., 2007; Kossek & Hammer, 2008). In addition to our theoretical contributions, this study extends prior research by adopting a more rigorous supervisor-rated and multilevel research design, contributing to recently growing research on FWP such as I-deals (Bal et al., 2015).

It should be noted that FSSBs and family supportive organizational culture might contribute to family enhancement and family life at the expense of work performance and

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work engagement (Bakker et al., 2014; Christian et al., 2011). Employees who are provided with ample opportunities to contribute to their family life (e.g., spending more time with children, taking care of elderly people, working from home) might indeed be exhausted to perform their duties at work and may not feel engaged. However, we largely based our reasoning on spillover (Bakker & Demerouti, 2013; Marks, 1977) and work-family enrichment theories (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006) to argue that supportive family practices at work will influence one's family domain positively, leading to resource gains in both domains (Demerouti, 2012). In particular, we argued that supportive family practices at work such as provision of flexible work schedules to employees will influence one's family domain positively, leading to resource gains in both domains (Demerouti, 2012; Ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). Accordingly, the focal employee who benefits from family-supportive behaviors and practices is likely to feel valued and hence, tends to optimize his or her resources to achieve a perfect balance between work and home. In support of this, our post-hoc analyses revealed that there is positive correlation between work engagement and family enrichment ( $r = .32, p < .05$ ) as well as between work performance and family enrichment ( $r = .28, p < .05$ ). Yet, in line with our theorizing, we focused on how and when FSSBs and family-supportive organizational culture influence employees' work engagement and work performance and did not include family enrichment in our hypotheses. Further research might explore the dynamic associations between work and family related performance and how they are influenced by family supportive culture and policies.

## **Practical Implications**

The findings of this study also have implications for management. First, given the positive effects of family-supportive organizational culture and FSSBs on employee outcomes, supervisors and HR departments might coordinate together to ensure that these policies and practices are indeed implemented (Kossek & Hammer, 2008). The prevalence of

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flexible work practices is increasing in organizations (Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011a; Rofcanin, Berber, Koch, & Sevinc, 2015) and managers might acknowledge the need to develop and implement flexible practices as parts of human resource management systems. Moreover, supervisors might implement individualized flexible systems depending on the unique needs of each employee (e.g., Bal et al., 2015). To effectively put these practices in reality, supervisors might be trained to maximize benefits and leverage the potential penalties of these tools (Leslie et al., 2012). Employees who use these flexible policies might also benefit from training programs to drive their effectiveness at work.

Second, findings of this study underscore the relevance of family oriented culture when organizations might design and implement family friendly policies. Going beyond prior research which has examined antecedents of work engagement and performance mostly at individual levels, we showed that employee perceptions of FSSBs and family-supportive organizational culture are important drivers of these outcomes. Therefore, interventions to make organizations more family friendly could be designed at organizational and group level. For example, flexi-time (Nielsen et al., 2001), flexi-schedule (Rousseau, 2005) and flexi-location programs might be developed for each unit to assess the effects of such practices on employee engagement and performance. Such assessments might in the end point out to the need to make modifications based on the specific needs of the work group. Moreover, informal events (e.g., work unit lunches or coffee breaks; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001) as well as formal work events (e.g., mentoring, team training and development; Kossek & Hammer, 2008) might be introduced to help creating a family friendly culture. In general, our findings suggest that engagement and performance of employees might be enhanced by being attentive and sensitive to implementing family friendly practices – both via encouraging supervisors to engage in family friendly behaviors and via establishing a family-friendly culture.

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### **Limitations and Future Research Suggestions**

Our research has some limitations. A first limitation relates the design that prevents us from drawing causal inferences among the study variables. However, we built on SIP theory in forming the directions of associations (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Future research is advised to deploy different methodologies such as experimental designs to draw causal claims.

Furthermore, we examined the FSSBs from the perceptions of employees. The influence of FSSBs may depend on the extent to which employees perceive these behaviors in a positive manner, such as attributing these behaviors to the altruistic goals of the supervisors (e.g., Allen et al., 2013). Research might explore and integrate the perceptions and attributions of employees in the process through which FSSBs influence employees' work engagement and work performance, respectively.

This study was conducted in a unique cultural setting (e.g., Mexico). Previous research on SIP theory, flexible work practices and related research stream (e.g., work-family support) were conducted predominantly in developed and Western contexts that are characterized by individualistic work values. Hence, the needs of employees for family supportive policies might differ in individualistic versus collectivistic work cultures. Future research might take into account the possible unique effects of cross-cultural differences when exploring the associations among family friendly work practices and employee outcomes.

Our research introduces further new avenues. Our study is among the first to explore and discuss FSSBs in a non-developed context: Mexico. Macro economic conditions (e.g., low GDP per capita) and social difficulties (e.g, mother's mean age at first birth) of the country render family friendly policies challenging if not impossible in work environments (Merrill & Miro, 1996). Interpersonal relations are more important in the functioning of Mexican society than in impersonal, bureaucratic and highly regulated countries (Merrill &

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Miro, 1996). Extended family members, very close friends, and acquaintances in general, expect from one another various degrees of loyalty, material and spiritual assistance, emotional support, physical protection, and even flexibility in the enforcement of laws, norms, and regulations. As a matter of fact, for instance, 24% of the households are composed of an extended family. Given these circumstances, it is plausible to consider FSSBs as privilege provided to employees. Hence, future studies are needed to investigate whether and how cross-cultural differences (e.g., valuing family life) make difference in terms of the influence of FSSBs on employee behaviors and attitudes.

Moreover, different sources of social information that can improve employee engagement and performance can be integrated into this research stream. Responding to a call for research to investigate leader influences in this process (Paustian-Underdahl & Halbesleben, 2014), more research might be needed to explore other types of social influences (e.g., from co-workers, society or organization) in driving employee desirable behaviors.

Finally, to the best of our knowledge, this study is the first to establish the following: 1) the process by which FSSBs influence employee work performance and 2) the contingent role of family oriented organizational culture in our proposed relationships. Future research might integrate different antecedents and boundary conditions to these relationships so that organizations can develop useful resources for employees.

## **Conclusion**

This research has taken steps to progress our understanding on family supportive supervisor behaviors and family oriented organizational culture and how the interplay between the two shape employee engagement and performance. Relying on SIP theory, our findings revealed that family-supportive supervisor behaviors positively affect employee performance via influencing employee work engagement. Moreover, our findings demonstrated that family oriented organizational culture acted as a moderator between FSSBs



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and employee work engagement, strengthening the suggested relationships. Managers and HR may use this information to facilitate the balance between the work and family domains, foster work engagement, and eventually improve organizational performance.

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Figure 1

The proposed research model

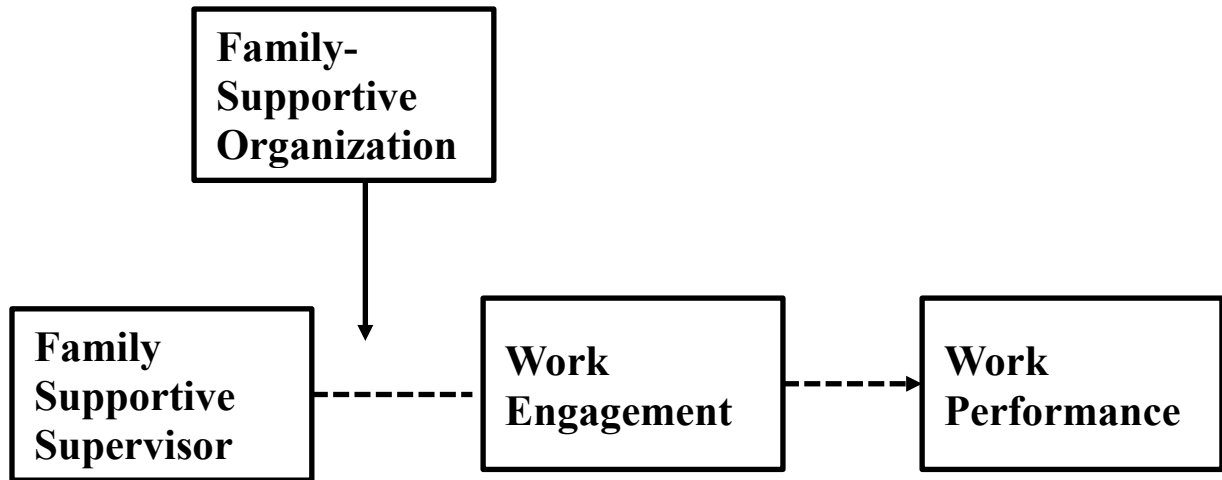
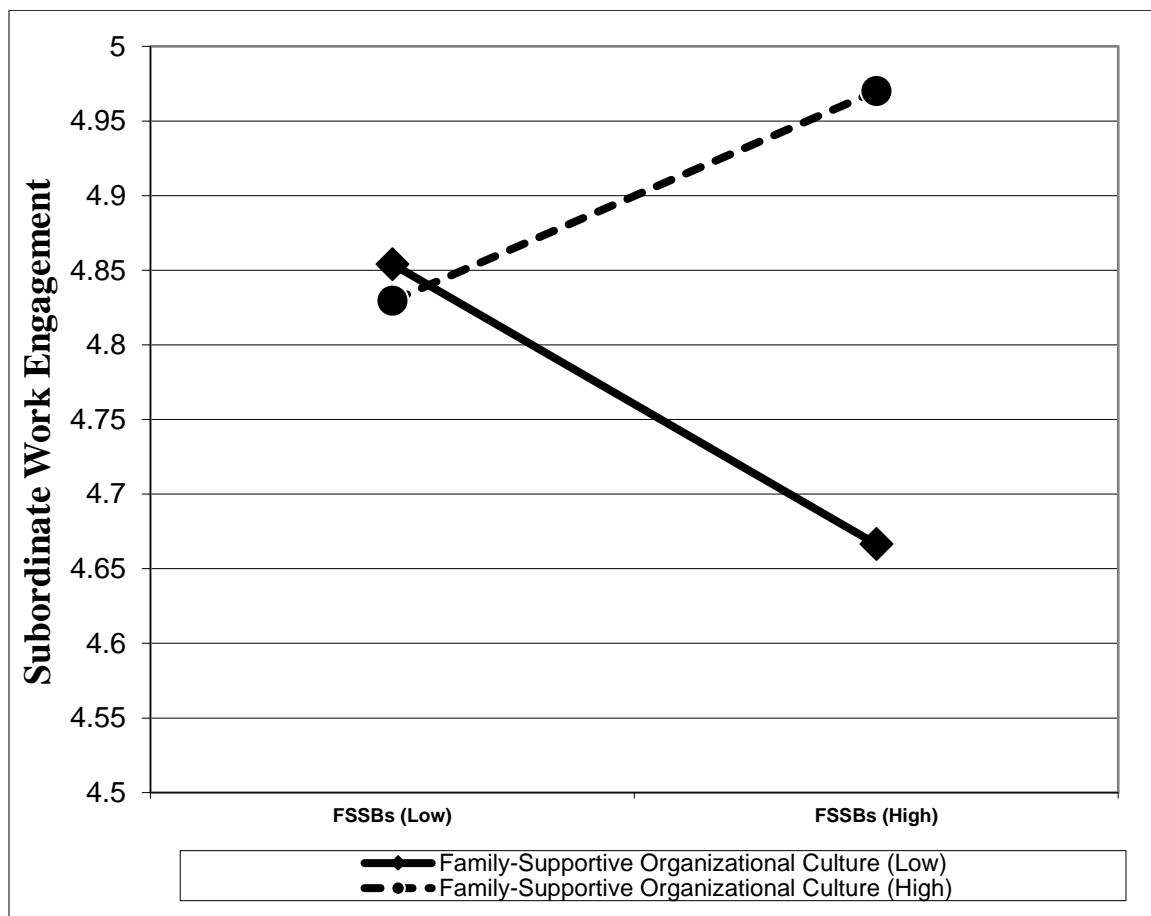


Figure 2

Interaction of family-supportive organizational culture and FSSBs on subordinate work engagement



## **Family supportiveness and employee work performance**

## Family supportiveness and employee work performance

**Table 1**

*Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations*

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 FSSBs	5.69	1.47	(0.97)					
2 Family-supportive organizational culture	3.84	1.64	0.34**	(0.85)				
3 Work engagement	4.82	0.79	0.21**	0.07	(0.76)			
4 Work performance	5.91	1.02	0.16**	0.11**	0.68**	(0.95)		
5 Intrinsic motivation	6.44	0.81	0.38**	0.19**	0.20**	0.12**	(0.88)	
6 Perceived organization support	6.31	1.02	0.43**	0.32**	0.18**	0.12**	0.48**	(0.93)

*Note.*

N = 654 subordinates nested in 134 supervisors

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Reliabilities are along the diagonal in parentheses.

## Family supportiveness and employee work performance

**Table 2**

### *Mediation Analyses Results*

<i>Variables</i>	Dependent Variable: Work engagement						Dependent Variable: Work performance					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Intercept	4.83	0.05	96.60	4.83	0.05	96.60	5.95	0.07	85.00	5.94	0.04	148.50
Intrinsic motivation	0.13	0.03	4.33***	0.11	0.04	2.75**	0.11	0.05	2.23*	0.04	0.04	1.00
Perceived organization support	0.06	0.03	2.00*	0.02	0.03	0.66	0.01	0.05	0.23	-0.06	0.04	-1.50
FSSBs				0.06	0.02	3.00**				0.02	0.02	1.00
Work engagement										0.88	0.04	22.76***
Level 1 intercept variance (SE)	0.15	0.03		0.15	0.04		0.23	0.06		0.07	0.02	
Level 2 intercept variance (SE)	0.44	0.03		0.44	0.03		0.81	0.05		0.48	0.03	

*Note.*

N = 654 subordinates nested in 134 supervisors

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .



## Family supportiveness and employee work performance

**Table 3**

*Moderation Analyses Results*

<i>Variables</i>	Dependent Variable: Work engagement								
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>
Intercept	4.81	0.05	96.20	4.81	0.05	96.20	4.83	0.05	96.60
Intrinsic motivation	0.12	0.04	3.00**	0.11	0.04	2.75**	0.12	0.04	3.00**
Perceived organization support	0.06	0.03	2.00*	0.04	0.03	1.33	0.02	0.03	0.66
FSSBs				0.05	0.02	2.50**	0.02	0.02	1.00
Family-supportive organizational culture				0.02	0.02	1.00	0.01	0.02	0.50
FSSBs *Family-supportive organizational culture							0.04	0.01	4.00***
Level 1 intercept variance (SE)	0.17	0.04		0.17	0.03		0.16	0.04	
Level 2 intercept variance (SE)	0.44	0.03		0.45	0.03		0.44	0.03	

*Note.*

N = 654 subordinates nested in 134 supervisors

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .